

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 DPW-01 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /094 W

----- 105018

R 170959Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 103

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, PK, BG

SUBJECT: REPATRIATION OF BENGALLEES

REF: ISLAMABAD 5637

SUMMARY: THE 5,000 BENGALLEES WHOSE PENDING REPRIATION WAS ANNOUNCED BY BHUTTO ON JULY 11 WILL BE SELECTED BY ICRC FROM THE 15,000 EARLIER PROPOSED BY GOP FOR REPATRIATION. ICRC FORESEES PROBLEM WITH RECENTLY TIGHTENED BDG PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING ENTRY PERMITS. ICRC CONFIRMS THAT 200 DEPENDENTS OF PAK POWS IN INDIA WILL BE REPATRIATED JULY 20. END SUMMARY

1. EMBOFF CALLED ICRC CHIEF DELEGATE MARTIN JULY 17 TO SEEK CLARIFICATION OF PRESIDENT BHUTTO'S JULY 11 STATEMENT THAT GOP WAS PERMITTING "PRIORITY REPATRIAON OF ANOTHER 5,000 BENGALLEES". MARTIN CONFIRMED THAT 5,000 BENGALLEES WOULD BE SELECTED FROM AMONG THOSE 15,000 WHOM

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GOP HAD EARLIER PROPOSED FOR REPATRIATION. HE SAID THAT

ICRC HAD NOW PROCESSED APPROXIMATELY 14,500 BENGALLEES. BHUTTO'S ANNOUNCEMENT CONSTITUTED FINAL CLEARANCE PROCEDURE FOR 5,000 OF THESE WHO HAD ALREADY OBTAINED EXIT VISAS FROM GOP.

2. MARTIN SAID THAT MFA HAD VERBALLY TOLD ICRC THAT "HUMANITARIAN" GESTURE WAS BEING UNDERTAKEN TO EXPRESS GOP APPRECIATION FOR ICRC EFFORTS OVER PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. (MARTIN SAID THAT MFA HAD USED SAME LINE WITH UNHCR IN EXPRESSING ITS APPRECIATION TO UNHCR FOR ITS EFFORTS.)

3. MARTIN STATED THAT MODALITIES WOULD BE HANDLED AS IN RECENT REPATRIATION OF 450 BANGALEES. ICRC WOULD SELECT BANGALEES TO BE REPATRIATED AND ARRANGE FOR THEIR ASSEMBLY AT SELECTED POINTS. UNHCR WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR TRANSPORTATION TO BANGLADESH. MARTIN INDICATED THAT SELECTION OF 5,000 FROM AMONG 15,000 WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND TIME-CONSUMING PROCESS. HE PROPOSED TO SELECT INTER ALIA NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TO WHOM ICRC HAD BEEN GRANTING RELIEF PAYMENTS, SUCH AS BENGALLEE STUDENTS. FURTHER COMPLICATION WAS BDG'S TIGHTENING OF PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING ENTRY PERMITS TO BENGALLEES. MARTIN INDICATED THAT BDG, WHICH HAD GRANTED BLANKET CLEARANCE FOR 15,000 EARLIER, HAD BEEN VERY STRINGENT IN GRANTING ENTRY PERMITS TO THOSE BENGALLEES RECENTLY REPATRIATED. HE FORESAW THAT BDG WOULD PROBABLY REQUIRE NEW INDIVIDUAL CLEARANCES FOR EACH OF 5,000 BENGALLEES PRIOR TO GRANTING THEM ENTRY PERMITS.

4. EMBOFF ALSO TOOK OCCASION TO INQUIRE ABOUT PRESS REPORTS THAT 200 WOMEN AND CHILDREN DEPENDENTS OF PAKISTANI PRISONERS OF WAR AND CIVILIAN INTERNEES WERE BEING REPATRIATED AT WAGAH BORDER CROSSING JULY 20. MARTIN CONFIRMED PRESS REPORTS STATING THAT THIS MATTER WAS BEING HANDLED BY SWISS. THESE 200 CONSTITUTE FIRST GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 1,400 DEPENDENTS WHO WILL BE REPATRIATED IN COMING WEEKS. REMAINDER OF APPROXIMATELY 4,500 DEPENDENTS HAVE OPTED TO REMAIN WITH THEIR HUSBANDS IN INDIAN DETENTION CAMPS.

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5. MARTIN WAS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC THAT LONG-STANDING DEADLOCK ON POPULATION EXCHANGES HAD NOW BEEN BROKEN ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZED THAT BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES WERE MANY SANDERHOFF

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